Historic, Archive Document

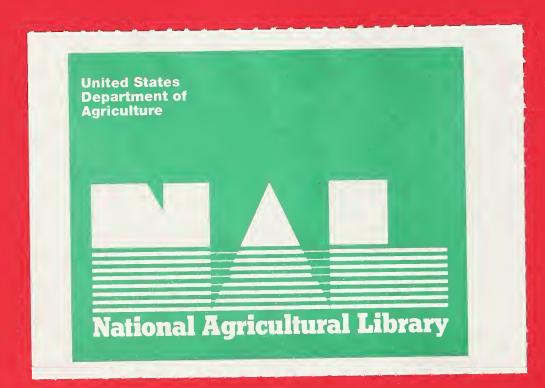Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

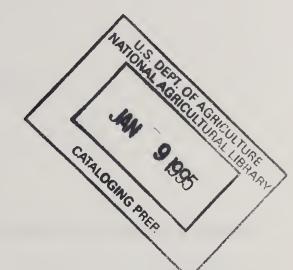# Electronic Sources for Food and Nutrition Information

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**Food &
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Electronic Sources for Food and Nutrition Information

Food and human nutrition information is available through many computer-based systems. Electronic bulletin boards and remote databases are a more and more popular way of information exchange. They are accessible around the clock, so information is available whenever it is needed.

This publication lists a small selection of electronic bulletin boards and databases which contain food and human nutrition information. Each of the systems are government-sponsored and are available for the public free of charge.

For each of the systems we have included a short description and basic instructions for access. The instructions are written so that even new users will understand them. They are also useful for people who do not have much experience in connecting to remote computers.

It is interesting and fascinating to explore a bulletin board or database and its features. We encourage everybody who is interested in food and human nutrition-related topics to call the systems described here.

AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY FORUM (ALF)

The Agricultural Library Forum (ALF) is an electronic bulletin board system (BBS) produced by the National Agricultural Library (NAL) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It contains information about agricultural topics, including food, human nutrition, and nutrition education.

The nutrition-related material is provided by the Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC). For example, you will find information about food labeling, a calendar of food and nutrition meetings, and the FNIC publication list. You also can download FNIC's **Nutri-Topics** and the **Microcomputer Software List**.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using ALF. You only need to pay the telephone rates.

REGISTRATION:
No pre-registration is required to access ALF. You will become a registered user after you first log in. However, if you are unfamiliar with dialing into BBS's, you may get pre-registration assistance by calling (301) 504-5113.

ACCESS:
To access the Agricultural Library Forum you need a computer, modem, and communications software.

To access food and nutrition information on ALF:

a.   Dial one of the following phone numbers:
     (301) 504-6510
     (301) 504-5111
     (301) 504-5496
     (301) 504-5497
     Communications settings are: 8 data bits, one stop bit, no parity, full duplex. Terminal emulation should be none, ASCII, or TTY.
b.   ALF's welcome screen appears, and you will be asked for your name. The first time you access ALF, the system will also ask you for your city and state. Then type "R" to register and enter a password of your choice. The ALF policy will scroll by.
c.   For the next 3 questions about your terminal and file transfer protocol type "n" each time for NO or NONE. Then enter your preference for Turbokeys.
d.   Then you will see announcements, ALF News Flashes, and the NAL Bulletin Menu, before the RBBS-PC Main Menu appears. First-time callers should answer "n" to the "new bulletins" prompt as all bulletins will be new bulletins.
e.   Select "J" for Join Conferences. Type "food" at the next prompt to join the food conference when the system asks you "Join what conference".

f. The welcome message of the FOOD subboard will appear, followed by announcements.
g. Next you will see the RBBS-PC Main Menu of the FOOD subboard. Select "B" to see the Food and Nutrition Bulletin List.
h. Type the number of the bulletin you wish to read.
i. To exit type "G" for Goodbye at the RBBS-PC Main Menu, **or**, if you wish to download a file, proceed with the following directions.

Downloading a file:
a. Select "F" for Files from the RBBS-PC Main Menu or the FOOD subboard Main Menu. The RBBS-PC File Menu will appear.
b. To see a list of all file categories in ALF type "L" for List files.
c. Select "fnicpubs" to see a list of files which are available from FNIC.
d. Type "D" for Download file at the RBBS-PC File Menu.
e. Next you will be asked for a file transfer protocol. Select a protocol which is supported by your communications software package.
f. When the system prompts you that it is ready to send the file, instruct your communications software to receive the file.

NOTE: Some of the files have the extension .zip. They are called compressed files. Read bulletin number 4 from the NAL Bulletin Menu for information about zipped files .

For further information about food and nutrition information on ALF contact:

Gina McNeil
National Agricultural Library
Food and Nutrition Information Center
Room 304
10301 Baltimore Blvd.
Beltsville, MD 20705

Phone: (301) 504-5719
FAX: (301) 504-6409
Internet: gmcneal@nalusda.gov

For further information about ALF call:

Karl Schneider (301) 504-5113 or
Becky Thompson (301) 504-5414.

FDA BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM (FDA BBS)

The FDA Bulletin Board is available from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Primarily it provides information about medical and drug subjects for health professionals. The nutrition-related information is found throughout the bulletin board and is mostly about food labeling, food safety, and food regulations. For example you will find the **FDA Consumer** index and full text of selected articles, FDA's **Federal Register** summaries, FDA news releases, FDA enforcement reports, answers to frequently asked questions, and a calendar of FDA meetings.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the FDA Bulletin Board System.

ACCESS:
To access the FDA BBS you need a computer, modem and a communications software that is VT-100 or VT-102 compatible. Modem settings are: 7 bits, even parity, 1 stop bit.

You can connect to the FDA BBS either through a modem or Internet.

Modem:
a. Dial the Toll-Free number: 1-800-222-0185 or, if you are local to the FDA BBS (area code 301), dial 227-6849 or 227-6857.
b. After you are connected type "bbs" to login.
c. You will be asked for your name, password, organization and address to become a registered user.
d. The BBS will display a few messages. At the next prompt type "topics". To get more information about the content of each subject type "info all".
e. Select desired topic by typing its name.
f. At this point you can "scan" the headings of the documents and "read" them. Or, if you are looking for specific materials, do a keyword search. Type "search" and the system will prompt you for the keywords.
g. To exit the FDA BBS type "quit".

Internet:
a. Login to Internet.
b. Select your operating system.
c. Type: **telnet fdabbs.fda.gov**
-> follow modem instructions at step b.

NOTE:
It is very helpful to select "manual" from the topic list. It is the user guide for the bulletin board and contains all information about topics, commands, and persons to contact if you need help.

For further details about the information on the FDA BBS contact:

Karen Malone
FDA Press Office, HFI-20
Rockville, MD 20857
Phone: (301) 443-3285

If you need technical support contact:
(Mon - Fri 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. EST)

Parklawn Computer Center
Phone: (301) 443-7318

FDA PRIME CONNECTION
(PRogram Information Material Electronic CONNECTION)

The FDA PRIME CONNECTION is an computer-based information system available from the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

It provides technical information about regulatory issues and policies on retail food protection, milk safety, and seafood safety. For example it contains the Milk Shippers List, Shellfish Shippers List, FDA Fish List, and regional milk seminar questions and answers.

Furthermore there is a chapter on technical references, where you will find information about foodborne pathogenic microorganisms and natural toxins, sanitizer, and FDA enforcement actions.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the FDA PRIME CONNECTION system.

REGISTRATION:
A pre-registration is required to access FDA PRIME CONNECTION. You can request an application form from the address below.

ACCESS:
To access FDA PRIME CONNECTION you need a computer, modem and a communications software.

Depending on your location and the speed of your modem, there are different local numbers available to connect to the system. Otherwise, you can dial a toll free 800 number. You will get a list of phone numbers with your registration.

Complete instructions on how to access FDA PRIME CONNECTION, including your login code and password, will be send to you after you register.

After you have successfully completed the logon process, the FDA PRIME CONNECTION main menu will appear.

      a. Type "B" to see the bulletins and program information.
      b. At this point you have to choose a topic. Type "fp" for retail food, "ms" for milk safety, "ss" for seafood safety, "fbp" for foodborne pathogenic microorganisms and natural toxins, and "tr" for other technical references.
      c. Select the bulletin you are interested in from the list and type its name. If you wish to download it, note down the filename.

d. To get back to the main menu type "Q" for quit.
   e. To exit the system type "G" for goodbye, **or** if you wish to download a file proceed with the following directions.

<u>Downloading a file:</u>

   FDA PRIME CONNECTION allows you to download a file either as ASCII-text or as WordPerfect file. To get the ASCII version use the TXT extension for the filename; to get the WordPerfect version, use WP5 as extension.

   a. Type "F" for Files-List/Dwnld from the main menu.
   b. If you don't know the filename type "L" for List Files, type abbreviation for the topic, then note down the filename from the list.
   c. Type "D" for Download from the Files menu.
   d. Enter the filename at the Download what file prompt.
   e. Select protocol. Choose X-modem or Y-modem for downloading a WordPerfect file. Choose ASCII for a .txt file.
   f. When the system prompts that it is ready to send instruct your communications software to receive the file.

For a registration application and further information contact:

Food and Drug Administration
FDA PRIME CONNECTION
200 C Street, SW - HFS-625
Washington, DC 20204-0001
Phone: (202) 205-8140
FAX: (202) 205-5560

FOOD INDUSTRY DATABASE (FIND)

Food INDustry is a full-text database of the Food Industry Development Division, Agri-Food Development Branch of Agriculture Canada. It provides information about food industry topics such as production, markets, trends, research, programs, and developments.

The material is contributed by Canadian governmental agencies, Canadian universities, Canadian food industry and international organizations.

Information in FIND is divided in to the following subject areas:

a. Assistance programs
b. Calendar
c. Canadian Regulations
d. Contacts
e. Specialty Crops
f. Environment
g. Food Research Establishments
h. Markets
i. Reports
j. Retail and Food Service
k. United States Regulations

"Reports" contains many documents about nutrition, food safety, and food irradiation.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the FIND database. You only need to pay the telephone rates.

REGISTRATION:
A pre-registration is required to access FIND. You will get the ID, password, and further instructions by contacting the address below.

ACCESS:
To access FIND you need a computer and modem. It is recommended to use the ONLAN communications software to communicate with the database. The ONLAN software package and instructions for installing it, is available from Agriculture Canada when you become registered.

FIND is produced by using Folio Views Software. Detailed instructions how to perform keyword searches in the database and how to download documents are provided in the short user guide.

Folio Views also has a "Mail" feature, which enables you to communicate with other users.

NOTE:
FIND is not available on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for information updating.

To request an ID, password, and User Guide for the FIND database and for further information contact:

Monica Treidlinger
Food Industry Development Division
Agri-Food Development Branch
930 Carling Avenue, Room 10101
Sir John Carling Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A OC5

Phone: (613) 995-9554
FAX: (613) 992-0921

INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION DATABASE (IFAN)

The International Food and Nutrition Database (IFAN) is part of PENpages, a computer-based information system supported by host computers of the Penn State's University Park Campus. The information in IFAN is provided by nutrition and health professionals of the Pennsylvania State University, USDA's Food and Nutrition Information Center, and others worldwide.

IFAN is a full text database containing documents like newsletters (for example: Food for Thought, Nutrition News, and Food Science Corner), fact sheets, bibliographies, research summaries, and other nutrition-related materials. You will find information about dietary guidance, nutrition education, sports nutrition, eating disorders, weight control, and many other topics.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the IFAN database. You only need to pay for the telephone call if you access IFAN through a modem.

ACCESS:
To access IFAN you need a computer, modem, and a communications software that is VT-100 or VT-102 compatible.

You can connect to IFAN either through a modem or Internet:

Modem:
a. Dial the phone number: (814) 863-4820.
b. After you are connected, press Enter until the prompt psupen> displays.
c. Type "connect pen".
d. At the prompt Username: type the 2 letter abbreviation for your state (e.g. MD, VA).
e. After the welcome message press Enter to get to the PENpages menu.
f. Select the menu option to go to the PENpages main menu.
g. Select the International Food and Nutrition Database. Then select the option of interest.
h. To exit the IFAN menu press ctrl-e to go back to the PENpages menu. Select the logoff option. At the prompt psupen> type "logout".

Internet:
a. Login to Internet.
b. Select your operating system.
c. Type: telnet psupen.psu.edu
-> follow modem instructions at step d.

KEYWORD SEARCH:

The keyword search option in PENpages allows users to search for documents by subject or specific document type. Two-word keywords are connected by a hyphen and all keywords are singular.

Example:
If you are looking for the **Nutri-Topics** about sensible nutrition by the Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) follow these steps:

a. Select the Index-Keyword Search option from the PENpages menu.
b. Type the keyword -> "FNIC"
c. Select keyword number from the list. Number 3 is the default -> press the Enter key
d. At the next prompt you can
    1.) Either list the titles of the documents -> type "l" and press the Enter key
    2.) Or reduce/expand your search by entering other keywords -> type "r", press the Enter key, then type "consumer-education"
e. After you listed the titles, select title number to read or download the document.
f. To exit the Index-Keyword Search option type "@" at any prompt until you are back on the PENpages menu.

HINTS: ctrl-s stops scrolling a document
         ctrl-q continues scrolling a document again
         ctrl-b returns to the previous menu
         ctrl-e exits IFAN

For further information about the IFAN database, contact:

Victoria M. Getty, IFAN editor
Penn State Nutrition Center
417 East Calder Way
University Park, PA 16801-5663

Phone: (814) 865-6323
FAX: (814) 865-5870
Internet: psnutrition@psupen.psu.edu

NUTRIENT DATA BANK BULLETIN BOARD (NDB BB)

The Nutrient Data Bank Bulletin Board (NDB BB) is available from the Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It provides you with information about current HNIS publications, Nutrient Data Bank Conference announcements, and computer files of the nutrient composition of foods. For example you will find the USDA Nutrient Data Base for Standard Reference, nutrient data used in USDA's Nationwide Food Consumption Survey, and the HNIS's consumer level software program **Dietary Analysis Program (DAP)**.

The NDB BB allows you to read and download the bulletins. You can also send messages to the bulletin board system operator, however you can't send messages to other users of the BB.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the NDB BB. You only need to pay the telephone rates, if you access the bulletin board through a modem.

REGISTRATION:
No pre-registration is required to access the NDB BB. You will become a registered user after you first log in.

ACCESS:
To access the Nutrient Data Bank Bulletin Board you need a computer, modem and communications software.

You can either connect NDB BB through a modem or through Internet:

Modem:
   a. Dial the phone number (301) 436-5078.
      Communications settings are: 8 data bits, one stop bit, no parity, full duplex.
   b. After the connection is established you will be asked for your name, city and state.
   c. A welcome message will appear and then you will be asked if you want to register.
   d. Press "R" for register. Then enter your password of your choice.
   e. Select the type of display and the default protocol.
   f. The Nutrient Data Bank Bulletin Board Menu will appear. You can choose the subject of interest and read or/and capture the bulletin(s).
   g. Select "B" from the RBBS-PC Main Menu to read the bulletins.
   h. To exit type "G" for Goodbye at the RBBS-PC Main Menu, **or** if you wish to download a file proceed with the following directions.

<u>Downloading a file:</u>
    a.   Select "F" for Files from the RBBS-PC Main Menu.
    b.   Press "L" for List files from the RBBS-PC File Menu and note down the filename.
    c.   Type "D" for Download file at the RBBS-PC File Menu. At the prompt "Download what file(s)" type in the filename.
    d.   Next the system will ask you for the file transfer protocol. Select desired protocol, if no default protocol was chosen at the registration.
    e.   When the system prompts that it is ready to send instruct your communications software to receive the file.

Internet:
    a.   Login to Internet.
    b.   Select your operating system.
    c.   Type: **telnet info.umd.edu**
    d.   At the prompt login: type "info".
    e.   Enter your terminal type.
    f.   After the welcome message select 'Government' from the menu, then 'US', and finally 'NutrientData' from the next menu.
    g.   Select 'Bulletins'.
    h.   You will see a menu at the top of the screen. View should be highlighted to read the bulletin. Select number of bulletin you want to read.
    i.   To exit type "q" for Quit.

<u>Downloading a file:</u>
    a.   Choose bulletin(s) or file(s) you wish to download. Move curser there and type "s" for Select from the top menu.
    b.   Type "x" for X-fer from the top menu.
    c.   The system will ask you for a protocol. Select 'FTP'.
    d.   Type in the address of your computer (for example asrr.arsusda.gov), your user ID, and your password. Then rename the file you are downloading, if desired.
    e.   You will find the file in the directory of the operating system and you can tranfer it to your word processing software.

For futher information about the NDB Bulletin Board, contact:

David B. Haytowitz
Human Nutrition Information Service
6505 Belcrest Road, Room 315
Hyattsville, MD 20782

Phone: (301) 436-8491
Internet: info-12@info.umd.edu

QUERRI
(Questions on University Extension Regional Resource Information)

QUERRI is a bibliographic database supported by the Cooperative Extension Services of the north central states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin). It provides information about written and audiovisual educational materials about agriculture, community resource development, 4-H, and home economics. QUERRI is a product of the North Central Region Educational Material Project (NCREMP).

The food and nutrition information is related to family and consumer issues. For example, topics include food safety, pesticides, home food preservation, nutrition for children, and nutrition education. You find the materials by conducting keyword searches in the database. Copies of the listed materials can be ordered from the distribution offices of the producing institutions.

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the QUERRI database. You only need to pay the telephone rates, if you access the database through a modem.

ACCESS:
To access QUERRI you need a computer, modem, and communications software.

You can connect to QUERRI either through a modem or Internet:

Modem:
  a. Dial into the Iowa State University microcomputer by typing: **515-294-[your baud speed]**. For example, for a 2400 baud modem type: 515-294-2400. Modem settings are: 8 data bits, one stop bit, no parity, full duplex.
  b. At the DIAL: prompt type: **querri**. If the answer is "busy", try again.
  c. After you access QUERRI the system will ask you some questions about your location and the purpose of your call. Then the main menu will appear.
  d. If you are connecting to QUERRI for the first time select "How to Use QUERRI" from the main menu, and go through the short tutorial. This also includes information about how to conduct a keyword search.
  e. If you are looking for new materials you can also select "Quarterly Database Update of New Resources" from the main menu. Then select "Family & Consumer Science" to find information about "Food and Nutrition" and "Human Health" in the update.
  f. To exit type "r" at each menu until you are back to the main menu. Select "Exit". Now the system prompts you to evaluate some of its features.

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Internet:
      a.   Login to Internet.
      b.   Select your operating system.
      c.   Type: **telnet isn.rdns.iastate.edu**
      -> follow modem instructions at step b.

For further information contact:

Iowa State University
B-10 Curtiss
Ames, IA 50011

Phone: (515) 294-8802
FAX: (515) 294-4715
Internet: j2.ncr@isumvs.iastate.edu

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AUTOMATED RETRIEVAL SYSTEM (TEKTRAN)

The TEKTRAN database is available from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

TEKTRAN contains information about the latest studies in agriculture, food, and human nutrition. The research results are provided as brief interpretive summaries and technical abstracts.
For example, the user will find studies conducted by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Institute of Health (NIH), and the Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS).

COSTS:
There is no charge for using the TEKTRAN database. You only need to pay the telephone rates.

REGISTRATION:
A pre-registration is required to access TEKTRAN. You will get the login, password, and further instructions by contacting the address below.

ACCESS:
To access TEKTRAN you need a computer, modem and the suitable communications software (recommended are VSterm or CROSSTALK).

The following instructions are for CROSSTALK users:
First you need to create a file in your Crosstalk directory to set up the function keys. The Wang system uses the PF keys 1 to 32. With the IBM keyboard you can only use the F1 to F8 keys to move in the database, often in combination with the Shift, Ctrl or Alt keys (for example PF key 13 means to press Shift-F5). The content of the file and a list of the function keys is included in the instructions you get with the registration. Save the file as DOS Text with an XTK extension (for example: tektran.xtk).
Set the software to emulate VT-100, and then you can connect to TEKTRAN:

a. Dial the phone number.
b. After you are connected, type in your **login**, press the **Tab key**, type in your **password**, and then press the **Enter key**.
c. Press the **F1 key** to select TEKTRAN.
d. The Tektran report menu displays. You have different choices to search for studies. For example by keywords, scientist, date or location.
   To search by keyword press the **F1 key** for Keyword Report.
e. Type in your keyword(s). Use & to indicate AND between the keywords and ; to indicate OR.
f. Press the **Tab key** to get to the Date field.
g. Type in the date(s). Use : to indicate a range.
h. Press the **Tab key** to get to the Text Type field.

i. Select the Text Type. S for Interpretive Summary is the default.
j. Press the **Enter key** to conduct the search.
k. The next screen displays the manuscript titles. Mark the titles you are interested in with an **X**, or press the **F3 key** to mark all. Press the **Enter key** to display the reports.
l. To exit TEKTRAN press **Shift-F8** until you are back on the login screen. Then quit Crosstalk.

Downloading manuscripts:
To download records you need to create print files and transfer them to your PC.

a. Mark the desired records on the List Manuscript Titles screen.
b. Select the report format (Full Report, Titles Only, Technical Abstract, or Interpretive Summary). Then press the appropriate function key. For example **Shift-F4** for the Interpretive Summary report.
c. As soon as the print file is created a flashing message will appear on the screen. Press **Ctrl-F1** to display the print files. Note down the file name(s).
d. Press **Shift-F8** to return to the previous screen.
e. Press **Ctrl-F6** for Crosstalk File Transfer.
f. Enter the file name. Press **Esc key** to get to the command line in Crosstalk. Type **ca on** to turn your capture on. Then press the **Enter key**.
g. After the file is transfered into your buffer turn your capture off, name the file, and press the Enter key.

To request login, password and instructions for the TEKTRAN database contact:

Agricultural Research Service, USDA
Room 404, Bldg. 005, BARC-West
Beltsville, MD 20705
Phone: (301) 504-5345

If you need technical support call: (301) 504-5198